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MSGID/GENADMIN,USMTF,2008/COMUSFLTFORCOM NORFOLK VA//

SUBJ/ANNOUNCING APPROVAL OF THE IMPROVED FLAME RESISTANT VARIANT

(IFRV) COVERALL//

REF/A/MSGID:GENADMIN/COMUSFLTFORCOM NORFOLK VA/241800ZOCT2013//

AMPN/REF A IS THE MESSAGE DETAILING USFF INTRODUCTION OF THE FLAME

RESISTANT VARIANT COVERALL AND ROLL-OUT PLAN TO THE FLEET.//

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GENTEXT/REMARKS/1. THIS MESSAGE UPDATES REF A AND ANNOUNCES THE

APPROVAL OF THE IMPROVED FLAME RESISTANT VARIANT (IFRV) COVERALL. IT ALSO PROVIDES A DESCRIPTION OF THE IFRV COVERALL AND WEAR TEST RESULTS, AND INTRODUCES CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT FOR A TWO-PIECE FR VARIANT TO BE WORN AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

2. APPROVAL OF IFRV COVERALL. COMMANDER, U.S. FLEET FORCES (USFF) AUTHORIZES THE IFRV COVERALL AS APPROVED FLEET ORGANIZATIONAL CLOTHING TO REPLACE THE CURRENT FLAME RESISTANT VARIANT (FRV) COVERALL.

3. BACKGROUND. THE ORIGINAL FRV WAS RAPIDLY INTRODUCED TO REPLACE PREVIOUS AFLOAT UNIFORMS THAT LACKED FLAME RESISTANCE. IN LIGHT OF THESE SAFETY CONCERNS, SPEED OF DISTRIBUTION TO THE FLEET TOOK PRECEDENCE. RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANT DISSATISFACTION ACROSS THE FLEET WITH THE COMFORT AND DURABILITY OF THE FRV, USFF AND THE NAVY CLOTHING AND TEXTILE RESEARCH FACILITY (NCTRF) BEGAN DEVELOPING AN IMPROVED VERSION (IFRV) IN 2015.

THE IFRV COVERALLS ARE CONSTRUCTED USING A TRI-FIBER BLEND FLAME RESISTANT FABRIC. THE IFRV COVERALLS PASSED ALL SYSTEM LEVEL FLAME AND FLASH FIRE TESTING REQUIREMENTS AND THE FLAME RESISTANT PROPERTIES DID NOT DEGRADE WITH WEAR OR LAUNDERING FOR THE SERVICEABLE LIFE OF THE COVERALL. THE IFRV COVERALL PROVIDES THE SAME LEVEL OF SAFETY AND FLAME RESISTANCE AS THE FRV COVERALL AND ALSO OFFERS ARC FLASH PROTECTION.

4. IFRV COVERALL WEAR TEST RESULTS. USFF RECENTLY COMPLETED IFRV COVERALL WEAR TESTS AFLOAT, INVOLVING OVER 700 SAILORS SERVING ABOARD VARIOUS SHIPS THROUGH RECENT DEPLOYMENTS. IFRV COVERALL SUITABILITY WAS EVALUATED VIA ON-LINE SURVEYS AND END OF DEPLOYMENT FOCUS GROUPS. THE WEAR TESTS INVOLVED BOTH A FLIGHT SUIT VERSION AND A TRADITIONAL VERSION OF THE COVERALL. THE RESULTS WERE OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE IN FAVOR OF THE IFRV AND FAVORABLE TOWARD THE TRADITIONAL COVERALL. IN SUMMARY, 89 PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS THOUGHT THE IFRV LOOKED BETTER THAN THE FRV; 86 PERCENT THOUGHT IT WAS MORE DURABLE; 91 PERCENT SAID IT WAS MORE COMFORTABLE; AND 85 PERCENT THOUGHT IT WAS COOLER IN HOT CLIMATES. OVERALL, 91 PERCENT OF SAILORS INVOLVED IN THE TEST THOUGHT THE IFRV TRADITIONAL COVERALL WAS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE FRV AND 68 PERCENT THOUGHT THE SAME FOR THE FLIGHT SUIT VERSION. AS A RESULT, THE TRADITIONAL COVERALL VERSION WAS SELECTED AS THE REPLACEMENT FOR THE FRV.

5. FLEET ROLL-OUT. USFF IS WORKING WITH NAVY EXCHANGE SERVICES COMMAND AND DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY TO DEVELOP AN ACQUISITION PLAN TO INTRODUCE THE NEW IFRV COVERALL. TRANSITION FROM THE FRV COVERALL TO THE IFRV COVERALL IS EXPECTED TO OCCUR IN FY18.

6. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON A FINAL ROLL-OUT PLAN, MANNER AND OCCASION OF WEAR, AND ORDERING INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE PROVIDED AT A LATER DATE.

7. MARITIME TWO-PIECE FR VARIANT DEVELOPMENT. FOCUS GROUPS AND SURVEYS HELD DURING IFRV TESTING ALSO REVEALED A STRONG DESIRE AMONG SAILORS, CHIEF PETTY OFFICERS, AND OFFICERS FOR A TWO-PIECE

FR VARIANT THAT CAN BE WORN AT SEA AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT COMMANDS ASHORE (TO INCLUDE OFF-BASE). IN RESPONSE TO THIS DEMAND SIGNAL, USFF IS AGAIN TEAMING WITH NCTRF TO EXPLORE DEVELOPMENT OF PRELIMINARY DESIGNS OF A MORE PROFESSIONAL LOOKING, MODERNIZED TWO-PIECE FR VARIANT TO BE ISSUED AS ORGANIZATIONAL CLOTHING. THE INTENT IS TO PROVIDE LAYERING OPTIONS TO ALLOW FOR DE-BLOUSING FOR CERTAIN EVOLUTIONS (I.E., WORKING PARTIES) OR REMOVAL OF OUTER GARMENTS IN HOTTER ENVIRONMENTS.

UNDER LAYERS MAY INCLUDE FLAME RESISTANT, DRIFIRE-STYLE MOISTURE WICKING SHIRTS. THE TWO-PIECE VERSION WOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY VERSATILE TO APPEAL TO ALL AFLOAT COMMUNITIES. TO ENSURE SAILOR FEEDBACK IS INCORPORATED TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE, THESE CONCEPTS AND ASSOCIATED DESIGN FEATURES ARE BEING REVIEWED BY FOCUS GROUPS IN FLEET CONCENTRATION AREAS THIS MONTH. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE TWO-PIECE VARIANT DEVELOPMENT EFFORT WILL BE PROVIDED WHEN AVAILABLE.//

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